House Bill 14
Joint Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning
Room 472
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What is CAPS and What Does CAPS Do?

1. CAPS is the Child and Adult Protective Services System. The federal government calls it a SACWIS (Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System) system.

    CAPS supports the mission of the division:
    "Keeping Children Safe and Families Strong"

    CAPS supports the primary goals of the division:
    "Safety, Permanency and Well Being" for children in foster care.

    CAPS is no longer used by Adult Protective Services, they now have their own system.

    CAPS is used by:

    - Child and Family Services Division
    - Six Tribes (for Title IV-E kids only)
    - Department of Corrections (juveniles)
    - Youth Court (probation)
    - Child Support Enforcement (read only access)
    - Office of Public Assistance (read only access)

2. Reports of child abuse and neglect are recorded in CAPS by the Centralized Intake staff. The call center operates 24/7.
3. Investigations of abuse and neglect and the results of those investigations are recorded in CAPS.
4. Placements of children into foster care are recorded in CAPS.
5. Eligibility for Title IV-E funding is recorded in CAPS. (3 components - financial, judicial, licensing)
6. Foster Parent data (and other providers such as group homes and shelter care facilities) including licensure information is recorded in CAPS.
7. Payments to foster parents, adoptive parents and other providers are made from and tracked in CAPS.
8. Management information in the form of 100+ reports.
9. Federal Reporting requirements include:
   a. NCANDS (National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System)
   b. AFCARS (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System)
10. Federal audits/reviews:
   a. Title IV-E Review (penalties for failing)
   b. Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) (penalties for failing)
11. Interfaces with other systems (Child Support Enforcement Division and Medicaid)
12. 228 Screens

Quick Facts

- 15,000 + reports of abuse and neglect/year
- 9,000 + investigations/year
- 2,300 + substantiations/year

- 1,800 children in foster care
- 1,900 adoption subsidies
- $30 million/year ($20 million for Foster Care and $10 million for Adoption Subsidies
- 180 social workers, 33 SW supervisors
- Offices in 40 Montana communities

Why Does CAPS Need to be Replaced?

1. CAPS was implemented in January, 1996 however it was built with technology that was already outdated at the time of implementation.

   Why? CAPS was transferred from the state of Iowa and transferring the system with the older technology was the cheapest option. Still, only about 5% of the code could be retained.

2. CAPS was built as a mainframe application with IDMS and COBOL. COBOL is a very structured and time intensive programming language. Making changes to the CAPS system to accommodate changing business rules is very time consuming and slow.

   COBOL (Common Business Oriented Language) was developed under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Defense in cooperation with computer manufactures, users and universities. The initial specifications for COBOL were presented in a report of the executive committee of CODASYL committee in April of 1960. It was designed to be a business problem oriented, machine independent and capable of continuous change and development. Major revisions were made in 1968, 1974, 1985 and 2002.

3. In order to use and navigate through the CAPS system, our workers must memorize hundreds of three, four and five digit codes.

4. CAPS is what is called a "green screen" system. Most of the lettering on the screens is a green color with a black background.

5. CAPS is not highly intuitive.

6. New social workers coming out of college have learned keyboarding, use a mouse and are used to software being "point and click". A person cannot navigate CAPS with a mouse. Having to learn a green screen system is a total culture shock to new employees and a step backward in technology.

7. CAPS is very time consuming for our staff. A point and click system would likely improve staff efficiency by 20 to 30%.

8. Poor data. Because CAPS is so difficult and time consuming to use, staff often fail to enter data or fail to enter the correct data. In order to find certain codes they must use an "F12 Lookup". Instead of using the lookup feature staff often enter codes they remember such as "OTH" (Other) or "UNK" (Unknown). Poor data then results in poor reports. Staff sometimes deliberately limit the data they input into CAPS because it is so cumbersome.

9. Reports. Social workers have very limited information available to them in the form of either paper reports or electronic reports. CAPS does generate more than 100 reports but many of them are of limited value.

What Do We Want From a New System?

1. Easy to use. Point and click.
2. Intuitive. Workers need to be able to quickly find what they need and navigate to the correct area.
3. Quality data and reports that are easy to access.
4. Take advantage of new technology whenever possible to increase data accuracy, timeliness and make staff more efficient. (Document imaging, G.I.S., PDA applications, notebook computers)
5. Reduction in staff turnover

The following chart depicts the staff turnover rates for the Child and Family Services Division:

	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
Social Workers Terminating	33	44	19	35
Total Number of SWs	203.82	203.82	203.82	203.82
Percent of SWs terminating	16.19%	21.59%	9.32%	17.17%
All Others Terminating	8	12	15	12
Total All Other Employees	126.93	134.13	136.63	136.63
Percent of Other Employees Terminating	6.30%	8.95%	10.98%	8.78%
Total Terminations	41	56	34	47
Total Employees	330.75	337.95	340.45	340.45
Percent of All Employees Terminating	12.40%	16.57%	9.99%	13.81%

6. Efficiency improvements.
7. Interface with the court data systems to improve outcomes for children.
8. System needs to be "SACWIS Certified", Currently there are only 6 systems in the country that are certified as meeting all the federal requirements.
9. 100 enhancements currently pending to be worked on. These would all be addressed in a new system.

Risks of Inaction?

1. More expensive to maintain.
2. Inefficient use of staff time.
3. Poor data.
4. Risk of federal penalties for AFCARS/NCANDS.
5. Difficult for the contractor to recruit COBOL programmers.
6. State employees dissatisfied with "green screen" application.

Miscellaneous

Funding – Federal funds are provided under Title IV-E of the Social Security act.